SC15 Paez SC15
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Tierradentro

/15 cont./

La Plata into the Magdalena Valley. Since the construction of an auto road from La Plata to Belalcázar, there is a good road connection both to the Cauca Valley and to the Magdalena Valley. From La Plata a bus goes to Garzón in four hours and to Neiva in seven hours. At the present time both cities have twice-weekly air service to Bogotá and Neiva, besides a daily train connection with the capital of the country. It takes about ten hours by bus to go from La Plata over the Central Cordillera to Popayán. From Popayán there is daily air service to all parts of the country.

Most of the archeological sites and the most important ones lie near the small village of San Andrés, on the hilltops and ranges of the valley of the same name. The place lies about six kilometers straight north of Inzá, separated from it by the Rio Ullucus and El Aguacate range. In order to get from La Plata to San Andrés, one first takes the road toward Belalcázar up the Rio Paez to Juntas, the point of confluence of the Rio Ullucus with the Rio Paez. From Juntas one must ride horseback west into the mountains for about three hours in order to reach San Andrés. This place is a village with the same characteristics as all Paez villages, that is to say, it consists of only /16/ a church, a school, the house of the town council, and a few other houses used by merchants and by the inhabitants for religious festivals. The latter, Paez Indians and colonists, live on individual farms on the slopes of the mountains along the valleys of the small streams, in a very unfavorable distribution, to be sure, as far as the Paez are concerned: the white and mixed-colored colonists live in the fertile valleys, mainly along the river courses, where they grow coffee, maize, and sugar cane, whereas the Indios must be content with the relatively unfruitful slopes.

/137 cont./

273 (= sweet water), as for the unfermented chicha, does not in any case have anything in common with the name for fermented chicha. Moreover, there is no separate name for sugar cane; nyúša also means "sweet" and "honey."

249 In the region of the Paez, sugar cane may be planted and harvested throughout the year. The juice of the cane is pressed [407] out in the sugar mill (lapíce). The latter stands in front of or inside every house; it belongs to every family in the same way [273] that each has its sugar-cane field and its chicha. The latter has [431] no commercial value whatever, but is merely given away, and 249 anyone who asks for it gets it. The sugar mill (Fig. 28 /see 407 p254 /) of the Paez of Calderas and southern Tierradentro consists of two tree trunks smoothed off on either side, which form the lateral posts (mágrena) of the mill. They are rammed into the ground and are provided, each one twice, with two recesses that receive the horizontal guidebeams (sépo) for the three crushing cylinders. These guidebeams are merely pinned. No metal parts or nails of any kind are used here or in the entire construction. Below the two lower guidebeams a strong plank is fastened to the lateral posts, upon which the three cylinders (ũnk) rest. Of these only the center one is turned by means of a crossbar, with human power or by a horse, whereas the two lateral ones are moved by means of pegs, which are most accurately fitted, but are not in addition pinned. A horizontal pole is lashed above each of the two lower cylinder-guidebeams, in order to guide the sugar cane shoved in for pressing. Below the cylinders lies a rectangular board (tablõn) with /138/ two longitudinal grooves, • [492] in which the extracted sugar-cane juice runs out at the side. If a horse is used to move the crushing cylinders, it is hitched up with two ropes leading out from a rope tied around the belly of the horse, so that the horse does not pull with its chest, as is customary among us.

H. Pittier de Fábrega illustrates (Pl. VI/2) another type of sugar mill from northern Tierradentro, which shows only two horizontal cylinders, one above the other. Both are clamped with pegs between two vertical posts and are turned on either side by hand. The extracted juice is caught in a pouch hanging underneath.

/140/

d) Animal Husbandry

231 Although the Paez keep large livestock, cattle and
233 horses, along with small livestock, they are not livestock-
[232] raisers in the true sense. They neither have anything to do
[492] with the breeding of their animals nor do they utilize their labor
[237] power to any great extent. The utilization of animal products,
too -- especially those of the large livestock -- bears no rela-
231 tion to the existing possibilities. Horses (hímba; stallion =
492 himbapítste, mare = himbaóite) are used least of all, though they
[556] do find use now and then in milling sugar cane. Actually, peo-
ple have them only to have them and to be considered rich.
They are used neither as draft horses in front of wagons nor as
beasts of burden, and only now and then as riding animals, with-
231 out a saddle, by young people. Adult men do not ride, even
484 though the mountainous country, difficult to traverse on foot,
492 fairly challenges one to ride, and the Paez, on their visits to the
markets, see almost all the colonists on horseback. But "we are
accustomed from the time of our forefathers to walk in the moun-
tains," they reply, "and we are much faster on foot than you are
on horseback." They are not wrong about this, and one would
not like to trust one of the Paez horses, degenerated through in-
breeding, to carry its rider on market days 30 kilometers over
232 hill and dale from Calderas to Inzá and back again. Since the
[556] Paez does not demand service of his horses, it is understandable
that only the number of head counts for him and his reputation.
How the horses look generally matters not at all; in no case is
there any breeding selection, nor does a man know anything
about the mating and birth of his animals, but generally finds
out about a new litter only after it has arrived. Gestation times
are unknown. From various parties I was assured that horses,
cows, sheep, and pigs were pregnant "about a year." Castra-
tion of stallions, bulls, and rams is not known; it happens now
and then in the case of boars, with the owner -- no specialist --
cutting out the testicles of the young pigs with a knife.

/168 cont./

484 Special orientation devices for traveling are unknown and are unnecessary, since no one leaves the wider area of his home district. Anyone taking a route for the first time joins someone who knows the way. One does not travel by night, and for this [482] reason the stars do not serve for orientation. The average load to be sold on market days is about 20 to 25 pounds for men; if a married couple goes together, the man usually carries the load, and the woman, the provisions. The daily distances covered are considerable. From Calderas by way of San /169/ Andrés to the market at Inzá is almost 20 kilometers. It takes about [492] six hours on foot. On horseback it is not much less, since one cannot ride fast on the steep paths of the countryside. Many Paez manage this route back and forth in one day, albeit only "without becoming intoxicated on the way," which is not altogether simple.

487 The traffic routes consist of narrow footpaths which can be traveled by walking or riding only in single file. As for roads 491 for wagons or autos, there is only one at present: the gravel auto road from La Plata to Belalcázar, traveling up the Río Paez. Since the end of 1952, however, a connecting road to Inzá is being built with modern American road-building equipment, which will then open up to traffic the southern, less mountainous area of Tierradentro, settled exclusively by colonists, and its products, coffee and panela /see the glossary, p.249 /. These roads are cut directly out of the sometimes very steep slopes and cross rivers and brooks with modern iron bridges.

491 The Paez, too, are accustomed to crossing the waterways 484 on bridges. It is not customary to wade across, unless it is a matter of very shallow brooks. Even then large stones are usually set in them, by means of which one can reach the opposite 491 shore with dry feet. The bridges of Paez may be divided into three groups, according to their construction. The simplest type is that of two thick poles or tree trunks placed side by side, without a railing, which span the ditches around the farmyards [825] and gardens that substitute for fences. Such ditches are supposed to prevent horses, cattle, and pigs from entering. Over the

/178 cont./

133 several leagues around were supplied for a long time with the
175 salt extracted from the three salt deposits that still exist in
319 Segovia. Across from these and on the other side of the Ullucos, in Vivorá, another salt deposit was also exploited.

114 At the confluence of the small stream called El Escaño
172 and the Pisimbalá, on the right bank of the latter and at the
[133] foot of the ridge of Aguacate, the Archeological Park of /179/ Tierradentro, a branch of the Instituto Colombiano de Antropología, is located on an alluvial terrace covering an area of two hectares. Founded some 15 years ago, it is in charge of the care and conservation of the archeological monuments, which have been known to the scientific world since 1936, but to which reference was made as early as around the penultimate decade of the last century, when Dr. Carlos Cuervo Márquez carried out his explorations through the "lands of the Paez and much of the Nevado del Huila." Subterranean necropolises with columns, colonnades and niches, black and red geometric painting on a white background, statuary very similar to the Augustinian, ceramics and metalwork are the principal exponents of this culture hardly known in descriptive form.

The Archeological Park of Tierradentro has served as the center of operations for the scientific expeditions which the national government has sponsored, fostered, and supported during the last 15 years.

II

Over the Zigzags of the Road

491 In order to travel on winding roads one needs horses re-
123 sistant to fatigue; a dashing spirit must yield to a solemn
464 step, firm tread, and steady pace.
492

4:Bernal Villa--24 E-5 (1952-1953) 1953 SC15 Paez SC15

VII

The Milling, the Chicha and the Chicha-makers

It remains to be said that the fiesta begins with the milling. Although it is common to use a horse to operate the sugar mill, it is more usual at fiesta time to move it with human arms, masculine or feminine. It makes no difference. The two laborers for the milling squat on either side of the sugar mill, and one hands over the cane while the other receives the bagasse, which is piled up at one side to be handed back again; this is done up to 12 times in order to extract as much juice as possible. The millers do their work in silence when they are not drunk; while they do it with diligence, there is relaxation, laughter, shouts, and imprecations when they are under the influence of alcohol.

The juice is gathered in troughs, or less frequently in calabashes and pots; it is heated to near the boiling point and then emptied into the troughs, in which, inasmuch as they are well "cured," fermentation is rapid. The troughs are made of huge tree trunks that reach up to one meter and 50 centimeters in thickness and four or five meters in length. As they are depleted through consumption, they are refilled with fresh cane juice. The troughs are covered with small mats made exclusively for the purpose. On the following day it is bubbly, yellowish, with a pungent, sweetish flavor. It is the beka pes (strong chicha) of the natives, who drink it with relish and delight. Five gourdfuls of this liquor are sufficient to make them drunk. Elsewhere called guarapo, while the Paez call it chicha, it is of great importance in their social life and diet. With its help the religious fiestas gain meaning, the mingas are carried out, baptisms and weddings are made more pleasant, and visitors are entertained.

Work without chicha is inconceivable, and while they work they get no food whatever; they merely drink chicha and chew

4:Bernal Villa--47 E-5 (1952-1953) 1953 SC15 Paez SC15

/213 cont./

796 sit in the center, his wife on his right and the síndico on his
left. The same etiquette and the same courtesies will be ob-
[264] served. When the liquor has been drunk, there will be a meal
of cabbage and meat: large bowls for the albacero, his wife,
and the síndico. For the others it will be served on platters.
All of them will sip the broth, squeeze out the meat and
cabbage with their hands, and put it in their pouches.

796 Overcome by the fatigue induced by several sleepless
513 nights, by the chicha, and the food, they will sleep on the
ground. When dawn heralds the new day, the enormous sala,
the fiuhne wala, will present the sight of groups of people
sleeping in a promiscuity of sex and age.

XX

The Saint's Procession

796 Immediately after the Mass, with the presence of those
788 who attended it and those who did not, the procession begins,
the essence of the fiesta, according to Padre González. The
image of San Juan, adorned with many flowers, is carried on
a litter by the faithful, who frequently relieve one another,
go round the church with a great profusion of gunpowder, and
[533] finally set off the fireworks castle. The music plays incessant-
796 ly and includes the singing of religious canticles. When the
●492 procession is over and the saint has been placed on the altar,
526 the men mount their horses, most of them bareback, and set
out to race madly /214/ across the plains of the locality.
They give free rein to their enthusiasm, allow their spirits
to expand, and whet their appetite for play. Groups of horse-
men in clamorous flight leave behind them their shouts of
"Viva San Juan." In everyday life action has been slow. Now
the movement and excitement seem to counteract the sluggish-
ness and heaviness of everyday life. The sweating animals

526 796 492 /214 cont./ reach the houses, where they have a short rest while their owners greedily drink the guarapo offered them by the occupants.

796 793 The fiesteros and albaceros, accompanied by a great number of people, go once more to the priest. They bring him the names of the fiesteros for the following year. The priest reads aloud the names of the fiesteros, the albaceros, and the mayordomos. The pronunciation of each name is accompanied by the ringing of a bell which is entrusted to a fiscal; when the announcement is over, there is a general pealing of bells. Each fiestero is advised by 15 to 20 mayordomos.

796 Then, kneeling in front of the church door, the old fiesteros hand over the banners to the new ones. They form a procession, and upon ending it, in the same spot where the banners were exchanged, they hand them over to the síndico, who waves them in the air one by one and ends by seeming to [787] drive them into the ground. If by chance the banner wraps it- [763] self around its own staff, some misfortune will befall the new fiestero. As a rule it is an omen of death, which fills with great sadness the fiestero whose banner had this happen to it.

Now each fiestero goes home, bearing in his hands the banner of the saint.

XXI

Banquet for the Albacero

796 574 After the procession the fiestero goes to the house of the albacero, where he receives attention with the above-mentioned calabashes of chicha and bottles of aguardiente. When this feast is over, the company moves to the house of the fiestero. In the center of the sala there stands next to the pango the table with two burning candles at the ends, the calabashes of chicha, and the liters of aguardiente. The albacero, síndico,

/217 cont./

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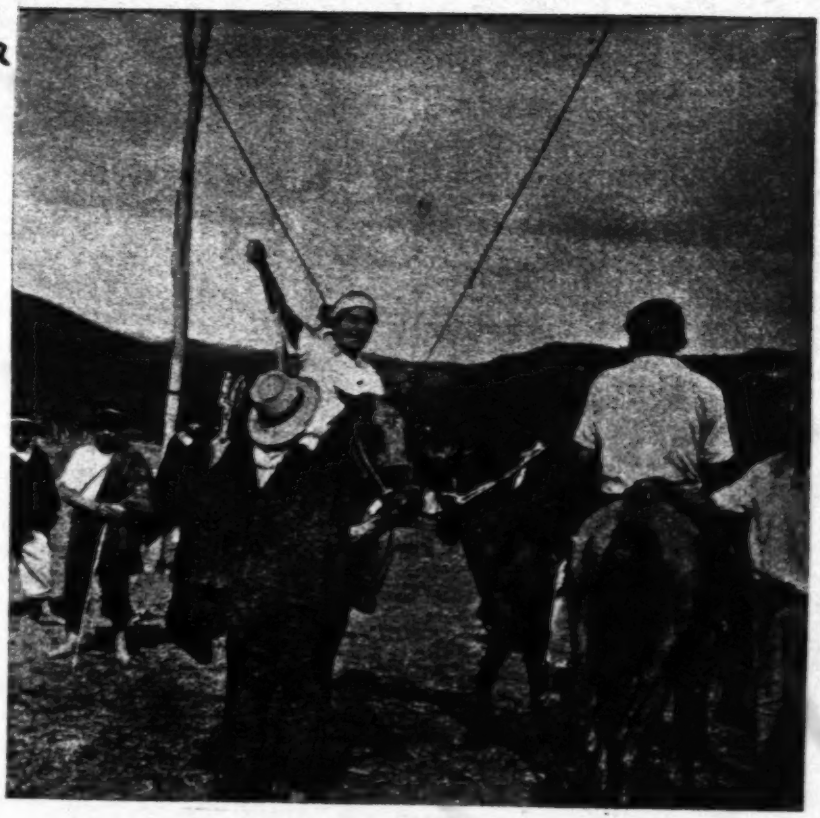

796 and in the same fashion. Abundant food and drink will be the
465 testimonial of his gratitude. They will also have the musicians
574 and dance. They will wake up in the morning, like those at the fiesta, lying on the ground.

/303 cont./

241 relatively recent times, has fertile and humid soils. The harvests
433 are large and of excellent quality. It produces profitable yields.
244 The real production of Mosoco potatoes is there. They them-
[492] selves designate it as the principal harvest. During the months of April and May, when the potatoes are being harvested, numerous droves of pack animals carry the produce daily to the market
[435] in Silvia. The profits from this crop are dependable. The cultivators state that even selling at four pesos per arroba it gives a profit. Normally an arroba of potatoes is quoted at six or seven pesos. The planting of potatoes in the paramo begins in October, is intensified in November and December, and the last is done in January. They take advantage of the mildness of the climate
[132] at this time. During the months of June, July, and August the
[484] winter is harsh, with intense cold and hurricane winds. Crossing the paramos at this time is quite perilous.

241 In San José, La Troja, El Cabuyo, El Cuartel, Lame, and
433 Vitoncó, during the first four months of the year, wheat, barley, maize, frijoles, broad beans, and peaches are harvested.

Toward the months of October, November, and December, harvesting is done in Suin, Chinas, Calderas, San Andrés, Togoima, Santa Rosa, and Mosoco itself and consists principally of Maize, frijoles, ullucos, potatoes, and coffee. They constitute what we might /304/ call the second harvests of the year in Tierradentro. The planting begins after Ash Wednesday (March approximately) and is intensified in the months of April and May.
244 The last is done in July. The potato seed planted at about this
433 time in Mosoco comes from the harvest in the "paramo." This is a secondary planting of scant yield. It usually results in losses, but the Mosoco cultivators plant with the aim of preserving the seed. It is interesting to note that the sole agricultural activity of one trader based in Mosoco is the planting of potatoes in the
[434] paramo. He dispenses with the July sowing altogether. He prefers to buy the seed in Silvia, he pays the entire labor force, and in spite of these investments, which are high, he gets a good profit.

/321 cont./

231 [796] [533] The slaughtering of the head of cattle for consumption at religious fiestas is accompanied by music (1).

1. Bernal Villa, S. "La Fiesta de San Juan en Calderas, Tierradentro /The Fiesta of San Juan in Calderas, Tierradentro/," p. 208.

[232] Of the equine livestock, they also prefer the females for reproduction. Horses are used for the milling of sugar cane, for the transport of loads, for long journeys. Many own saddles, [249] /322/ although generally deteriorated ones. Women never ride [482] on horseback. On long journeys the woman walks with a heavy [562] load on her back, while the man rides without carrying anything to hinder him.

231 The horses of the Páez are small, but very hardy and suitable for the rugged and difficult roads. They do not own mules or [754] donkeys. In Calderas it is said that someone brought a donkey [789] for the purpose of producing young mules, but the envious ones (sorcerers) cast a spell on it and killed it. Nor do they own goats, which they regard as very thievish and destructive.

In the houses they raise guinea pigs, chickens, and turkeys, and, on a smaller scale, ducks. Furthermore, dogs, [422] cats, and hogs are also raised. The former belong indifferently to men or women, while hogs and dogs are the exclusive property of the men.

The scant care given to domestic animals is worthy of note. There are no corrals of any sort, nor special caretakers [233] for the animals. Cattle are commonly left to fend for themselves in the pastures, and only every 15 days, or, more frequently, once a month, are they rounded up by their respective owners to [232] check on their existence or multiplication. They know about the need to give salt to cattle, but this article is supplied in small quantities and at very long intervals. Most of the animals of Calderas go to a small spring of brackish water in Tumbichukue. Among the other domestic animals, only the chickens, turkeys, and guinea pigs are fed regularly with grass, maize, manioc, and

The people of
/356 cont./

43 Mosoco have numerous droves of pack animals for handling the
628 import and export traffic, in which the Guambianos (with their
● 492 horses), called kasukos by the people of Mosoco, who regard them as good friends and not very different from themselves, also participate. The fact is that they live together, work together, and do their trading jointly.

563 The relations between "whites" and natives in Mosoco
621 seem to be cordial and based on mutual respect.

Family economy

594 The Paez family is basically an economic unit. It is made up of the parents and the children, and it represents a
[602] closed but effective circle. They do not go beyond their own
[476] limits in any way, so that the mingas and the distribution of the
[431] first fruits of the harvests are carried out primarily with consanguineal and political relations.

594 The manner in which this economic unit functions and in
462 which its members collaborate can be clearly understood from the division of the activities by sex. The supreme management of the family economy rests in the hands of the man; it is he who owns the land, the house, the tools, and the domestic animals. His arm has not been taught to wield anything but the machete, the axe, and the shovel. He is the owner of the crops and the one who determines where, how, and when work is to be done. His primary work is outside the house: on the land itself. The woman, on /357/ the other hand, remains inside the house, and her basic work is connected with the administration and working up of the products handed over to her by the man. Cooking and
[464] weaving are her specialities. It is true that the woman hires
[178] herself out as a day laborer on the fincas of the "whites" and that in some parcialidades, such as Mosoco, she participates directly in the preparation of the land and the weeding of the crops, but this is a relatively new phenomenon and is not yet universally accepted among the natives.

261 In general terms, the primary incentive for economic activity
594 dealing with food is the satisfaction of the basic needs of the individual and the survival of the family group. It is the security

7:Hernández de Alba E-54(no date) 1946 SC15 Paez SC15
Moguex

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

241 **Farming.**—The main subsistence of these tribes was and still is based on the cultivation of potatoes, which grow in great quantities in the higher portions of the territory known as Tierradentro, and maize, which is acclimated to the temperate and cold zones. There are three varieties of maize: sweet, soft, and hard. Additional crops were and are yuca or manioc, sweet potatoes, auyamas, ullucos, purutos, frijoles, arracacha, and various other vegetables, and a variety of fruits, including bananas, guayavas, avocados, papayas, [178] pineapples, and passion fruit. Today the *Páez* and *Moguex* are be- [433] ginning to grow wheat, coffee, which is an important item in their [273] economy, and sugarcane, from which is made a coarse sugar and molasses for their fermented drink, guarapo.

241 The men and women of each family generally cultivate the family 476 plot, but for large-scale maize or coffee planting, and for cultivation of the lands of the Church or saint, they work communally, and have meetings called "mingas." Communal work for any particular [782] individual is truly loaned labor, with obligatory recompense. The [273] beneficiary must feed his helpers, generally sacrificing a pig and preparing great quantities of chicha for the libations and nocturnal dances after the work. All adults must participate in working the Church lands, but each brings his own food.

241 Implements of cultivation are the digging stick, or macana, for 412 making holes for planting, machetes and axes for destroying vege- 407 tation, and picks and shovels for removing earth, except where re- 492 placed by plows pulled by animal traction.

231 **Domesticated animals.**—Domesticated animals include chickens, [177] turkeys, some pigs, dogs, and a few horses and cows. All but the turkeys are of European origin. These animals are rarely sold or killed for food, except for feast days, magical ceremonies, meetings, [438] and visits of relatives, friends or distinguished White men. But [251] sometimes the Indians buy meat in the weekly market and hang it over the hearth, where it is preserved by the smoke.

574 A custom which has persisted since the beginning of the Colonial 431 Period is that of always giving a guest the "camarico" or "cariño" (affection), a present varying from an egg to a chicken, together with some potatoes, vegetables, and coffee beans.

262 Formerly, meat was obtained from wild rather than domesticated 136 animals—boars (zaínos), guaras, guatines, birds, and guinea pigs, the 231 last being true domesticated animals kept in some numbers in the native houses.

252 **Food preparation.**—Food was cooked in pottery ollas, but metal and [415] enamel ware is now often used. The *Páez* make "mute," a soup of [177] boiled maize, cabbage, squash, and potatoes, and "cocido," a soup

7:Hernández de Alba E-5,4 (no date) 1946 SC15 Paez SC15
Moguex

obliquely across the rocks; (3) an arched bridge of bamboo floored with spaced sticks, equipped with a hand rail on each side, and supported with stones, bamboo braces, and vines (pl. 185, *bottom, right*); and (4) a covered bridge with thatched roof, built of heavy logs supported by sticks and stones and floored with boards—a marvel of calculated strength, which, like the third type, is made entirely of vegetable materials yet can support loaded animals. To build an arched bridge, two groups of Indians approach opposite sides of the river and each plants a long, strong pole sloping out over the stream. The chief of each group then climbs out his pole until his weight bends it down to meet that from the opposite side, whereupon, clinging with one hand, they lash the ends together with creepers. This constitutes the main element of the bridge which is then completed by the other Indians.

491 499 499

TRANSPORTATION

Some Indians now have horses and use them for traveling and for transporting large burdens, but, in general, transportation is by foot, objects being carried on the back or in netted sacks hung by a strap, especially when visiting markets. A woman carries not only a heavy load but her small child suspended on her back in a blue woolen blanket held with a broad woven band, or "chumbe." Peculiarly Andean is the custom that the man travels on horseback while the woman follows on foot with a large burden.

489 492 492

DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

The *Moguex* and *Páez* formerly wore only small cotton blankets (mantas), although most of them "went about naked even on the cold mountains" (Rodríguez, 1684, bk. 2, ch. 1). They painted their bodies with bixa, using, according to Del Castillo i Orozco, stamps to apply the color. The paint also protected them against the strong sunlight and insects. They went barefoot, as all the natives in Colombia. According to one chronicler, their hair was "shorn" (Robledo, in Jijón y Caamaño, 1936–38). They wore breast and nose ornaments of pure gold or a gold and copper alloy, and necklaces of small figures, beads, small stones, and snails.

291 302 [757] [825] [291] 301

Soon after the beginning of the Conquest, the Indians commenced to use wide, long shirts of a very crude weave and hats which were so closely woven that they would hold water. The latter, which the Spaniards called "tacillas de Páez" (Páez bowls), are still in use. The Spanish encomenderos required that the Indians working on their haciendas near Popayán be dressed. This was the origin of the characteristic garment worn today, which combines the old small blanket (manta) with European dress. *Moguex* men wear short linen pants, and a blue flannel sash which covers them to their knees.

291 177